



# **Alabama Board of Funeral Service**

## **Meeting Minutes**

July 22, 2010

### **I. Call to order**

**Carole Jones-Banks** called to order the fourth regular meeting of fiscal year 2009-2010 of the **Alabama Board of Funeral Service** at **11:00 a.m.** on **July 22, 2010** in **Room P-103** of the **Gordon Persons Building, 50 North Ripley Street, Montgomery, Alabama.**

### **II. Attendance**

The following members were present: **Carole Jones-Banks, Joe Lewis, Jason Maise, John Purdy, Samuel Seroyer, and Terry Wilson.** Staff present was **Warren Higgins, Executive Secretary, and Charles M. Perine, Associate Executive Secretary, recording.**

### **III. Approval of minutes from last meeting**

Mr. Purdy moved to approve the minutes of the April 29, 2010 meeting. Seconded by Mr. Maise, the motion passed unanimously.

### **IV. New business**

a) Approval of Licenses:

#### **1) Applicants who passed law exam given earlier:**

Mr. Purdy moved to approve all applicants who passed the state law exam given earlier that day upon the passing certification from the Conference under the new testing format, or those who had otherwise qualified for licensing. Seconded by Mr. Maise, the motion passed unanimously.

#### **2) Apprentice Funeral Director with Previous Time Credited:**

Mr. Higgins asked the board to consider for approval the re-registration of apprentice funeral director applications with previous time served as an apprentice credited to current registration for **Amber Gilbert, Carl Wilson, Capricia Hunter, Jamaal Hunter, and Terrence Windham.** Mr. Perine asked that **Patrick Munnerlyn** name be added from the last meeting. After review of his file, it was determined that the board in 1981 had given him credit for 12 months requiring him to complete another 12 months. Mr. Maise moved to approve the re-registration of apprentice funeral director's applications with previous time served credited to the current registration. Seconded by Mr. Purdy, the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Purdy inquired if there was any way to regulate how much lapsed time between the last apprenticeship and the request for re-registration before accepting the credited time. Mr. Higgins responded that it was up to the Board to consider the lapsed time and determine if they would accept the time. A person has three (3) years to complete apprenticeship and then two



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years to sit for the licensing exam. An apprentice may reactivate their apprenticeship two (2) times but it remains up to the Board to consider the lapsed time.

Mr. Lewis stated that he was contacted by a Mr. David Reynolds who said he had submitted for re-registration with previous time served credited but did not get a response from the office. Mr. Higgins stated that if the office had received an application from him his name would have appeared on the current list and that he should submit a reactivation application.

### **3) Apprentice Funeral Director and Embalmer with Previous Time Credited:**

Mr. Higgins asked the Board to consider for approval the re-registration of apprentice funeral director and embalmer applications with previous time credited to current registration for Robert Ward II and Jeremy Bass. Mr. Purdy asked did Jeremy Bass file show where he had done his previous apprenticeship and if he had completed school, because he had some concerns. After review of the file Mr. Higgins stated that Mr. Bass has completed school. Mr. Maise asked had Mr. Ward completed school or was he currently enrolled. Mr. Higgins stated that Mr. Ward was currently ~~in~~ enrolled in school. Mr. Higgins asked that the motion be made asking the applicants to provide proof of transcript or current enrollment from the school.

Mr. Wilson moved to approve the re-registration of apprentice funeral director and embalmer applications with previous time credited to current registration for Robert Ward II and Jeremy Bass after the applicants have provided proof of transcript or current enrollment in school. Seconded by Mr. Purdy, motion passed unanimously.

### **4) Permanent License:**

Mr. Higgins asked the Board to consider the following for permanent license: Thomas Whitson (funeral director and embalmer), Dana Jones (funeral director and embalmer), Rodney Craig (funeral director), and Michael Agnew (funeral director). Mr. Higgins stated that there is a correction with Rodney Craig name, it should be listed as Rodney Craig Dodson and Michael Agnew took the state law test earlier today and passed.

Mr. Purdy moved to approve permanent license. Seconded by Mr. Maise, motion passed unanimously.



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### **5) Establishment Applications:**

Mrs. Banks asked had inspections been completed on the establishments requesting establishment licenses. Mr. Perine responded that inspections had been completed.

Mr. Maise moved to approve establishment licenses for Kirk Funeral Home of Demopolis, Wardø Funeral Home of Valley, Davis Memorial Mortuary of Valley, Bessemer Brown Service of Bessemer, and Melvin Miller Funeral Service of Marion. Seconded by Mr. Lewis, motion passed unanimously.

### **6) Establishment Application Pending Inspection:**

Mr. Higgins asked the Board to consider JMW Mortuary of Birmingham establishment application for approval pending inspection. Mr. Purdy made it known that he was uncomfortable approving an establishment license before the inspection had been done. Mr. Maise asked what type of establishment was this funeral home or mortuary service. Mr. Higgins responded that this will be a funeral home. Mrs. Banks responded to Mr. Purdy by saying that the establishment would be inspected and the license would be approved pending the establishment passes inspection.

Mr. Maise stated that whether it was approved now or in October the approval would be based on the inspection. Approving it now pending inspection would avoid the company having to wait three months before opening when they may be ready to open in a couple weeks. Mr. Higgins stated the propose date for opening is August 3, 2010 and the next Board meeting will be in October.

Mr. Howard Johnson asked for permission to address Board. Permission granted by Board chair Mrs. Banks. Mr. Johnson stated that the building in question was a õshot-gunõ house and really should be inspected before license is approved. Mrs. Banks responded that there is nothing in the law that states what a building can look like on the outside. It still must meet the minimum requirements to pass inspection.

Mr. Maise stated all the Board is doing by voting now on this approval, is giving permission to the staff to issue a license to JMW Mortuary if they pass the inspection. If they do not pass, then do not issue the license. The Board must have faith in the staff that it hired to do the inspection according to the law.

Mr. Johnson asked if there was a limit as to how many funeral homes a funeral director or embalmer may qualify. Mr. Higgins responded that if the funeral homes are of the same corporation then no, but if they are of



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different corporation then a funeral director can only qualify one funeral home and there is no limit on the number of funeral homes an embalmer can qualify.

Mr. Maise moved to approve establishment licenses for JMW Mortuary pending inspection. Seconded by Mr. Lewis, motion passed unanimously.

### **b) Report from Executive Secretary**

Mr. Higgins started by commending the Board on filling the position of Associate Executive Secretary with Charles Perine. He felt that Mr. Perine was the best hire they could have made. He stated that Mr. Perine was very helpful, had some great ideas and he knows technology.

Mr. Higgins stated next week he and Mr. Perine would be meeting with the ISD department to discuss the purchase of new computers system because they could not make things happen under the current system. Mrs. Banks asked what would the time frame be for the new system and were all three computers going to be replaced. Mr. Higgins stated that they were waiting for the state to sign the new contract which was done on Wednesday July 21, 2010 and they would be talking with ISD next week to determine what would be the best system for them. He also stated that he was thinking of only replacing two, but he would go by the recommendation of the ISD department. Mrs. Banks stated that he should replace them all while he can because he does not know if the money would be there ~~late~~ later. Mr. Wilson asked what could be expected from the new systems. Mr. Higgins stated he would wait and let Mr. Perine answer that question.

Mr. Higgins reported that as of June 30, 2010 the uncommitted balance in the Boards account was \$116,344.67. Mr. Purdy asked would the Board be receiving a copy of the quarterly financial report. Mr. Higgins stated he could have that available. Mr. Higgins stated he would mail each Board member one the 1<sup>st</sup> of August for this quarter. Mrs. Banks added that the Board would like to have a line item expense report each quarter.

### **c) Report from Associate Executive Secretary**

Mr. Perine started by first thanking the Board for entrusting him the opportunity to fill the position of associate executive secretary. He also thanked the Board for the condolences expressed during the passing of his mother-in-law.

Mr. Perine stated that since his first day on the job, June 1<sup>st</sup>, he has worked with Mr. Higgins and Mrs. Dawson to update multi-forms throughout the office including the quarterly state law exams, logs, invoices, etc. He also stated that he had been working on collection of past due inspection fees and bad checks.



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Mr. Perine stated that he would be working with the ISD department and Mr. Higgins to purchase a new computers system and develop a program that would help the office run more efficient. In response to Mr. Wilson's earlier question of what can be expected from the new computer system, Mr. Perine stated that the new computer system would allow us to better serve our licensees and the Board. The way things are currently done when someone calls in concerning their license, a member of the staff has to place that person on hold go physically pull that persons file and return to the phone to help them. With the new system everything will be on the computer and can be pulled up immediately. When Board members request certain information it can be available at the stroke of key. Mr. Perine stated that many people are asking to see the Board and staff do things concerning the internet and changes that they would like to see take place in the office, but the office must first get the proper tools to work with and the current system is too old and slow to achieve the goals everyone would like to see achieved.

Mr. Purdy asked ~~de~~ does the office update the website or does someone else? Mr. Higgins responded that the state ISD department maintains the website at a charge of \$95.00 per hour. He further stated that the office waits to it has a collection of information to send. He stated he sent some items over to update the website and it took two weeks to get the items updated; therefore we are at the mercy of the state. Mr. Maise asked could the minutes and the agenda be emailed to each Board member before the meeting so that they may review it and if they have any questions or concerns they could request additional information to be available at the meeting. Mr. Higgins stated the minutes could be email and the agenda could if the Board members did not discuss the items on it before the meeting.

Mr. Perine also stated that he had completed 32 inspections, but could not discuss the finding at this time, because the establishment had been given a time period to correct the problems and must be allowed that time before it can be presented to the Board.

### **d) Other Business**

Mrs. Banks suggested that the Board should make a motion to approve the financial report presented by Mr. Higgins. Mr. Higgins stated that would not be necessary because it is already reported in the controller's office and it is factual information. Mrs. Banks stated that the Board needed to show that they approved or was presented the report because that was a concern by the Sunset Review. Mr. Maise moved to approve the financial report ~~present~~ presented by Mr. Higgins. Seconded by Mr. Purdy, motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Purdy commended Mr. Perine on the work he has done so far.



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Mrs. Banks asked the staff to check into the option of having an answering machine or voice mail on the phones for the office. Mr. Perine and Mr. Higgins stated that a regular answer machine would not be possible because of the way the phone system is set up. Mr. Higgins stated in order to have voice mail we would have to go through the state telecommunication and would be like another line. Mr. Higgins explained that from his past experience callers have been thankful to receive an actual person when calling instead of a machine or recording. He has received complaint at 11:55 p.m. and it does not cost the office anything for the staff to transfer the phone to their cell phone. Mr. Maise suggested that the office get a written proposal to add voice mail to all three phone lines for review at next board meeting.

Mr. Maise moved that a written proposal be obtained and presented to the Board for consideration. Seconded by Mr. Wilson, motion passed unanimously.

#### **V. Adjournment**

Mrs. Banks asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting at **11:54a.m.** Mr. Maise moved that the meeting be adjournment. Seconded by Mr. Wilson, motion passed unanimously.

Minutes submitted by: Charles M. Perine

X

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Carole Jones-Banks  
Chairman

X

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Warren Higgins  
Executive Secretary